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First Papers on Migrancy and Rural Poverty

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE EDUCATION OF MEXICAN-AMERICANS IN RURAL AREAS

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The Mexican-American Heritage: Developing Cultural Understanding

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FIRST PAPERS ON MIGRANCY AND RURAL POVERTY:

An Introduction to the Education of Mexican-Americans in Rural Areas

THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE:

DEVELOPING CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Pre-Service Programs, 1967-1968

Teacher Corps: Rural-Migrant
School of Education
University of Southern California, Los Angeles
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"The modern locus of poverty is even more the rural than the urban slum."

John Kenneth Galbraith,
The Affluent Society

These papers are dedicated to Irving R. Melbo, Dean of the School of Education at the University of Southern California and to Donald E. Wilson, Director of Teacher Education, who, because of their leadership and commitment to the cause of quality education have made Teacher Corps: Rural-Migrant a working reality.

PREFACE

THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE:
DEVELOPING CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

A teacher, to be effective as a teacher, must have an understanding of the historical and cultural background of the children with whom he is to be involved. To do this, he must develop sensitivity towards the various factors operative in the child's world. He must know that child's strengths, his weaknesses, and his individual educational needs. The ability to be an academic specialist who presides over a classroom is not, in itself, enough. Rather, the teacher must be a "caring" person, must understand the child in the context of his environment, must emphathize with the child in his culture. The teacher must, in fact be involved.

With this in mind, Teacher Corps: Rural-Migrant presents the following papers dealing with the historical and cultural background and the educational needs of Mexican-Americans in the Southwestern United States. Teachers of children who live in the migrant condition have a great need for better understanding of why these children react as they do to the world that they are thrust into in the schools. It is imperative that educators in rural-migrant communities become aware of the complex factors which perpetuate the culture of poverty, a culture which extends from generation to generation, from home to school and back to home. It is imperative that educators broaden the definition of the classroom to encompass the total home-school-community relationship; it is imperative to understand the feelings of Mexican-Americans towards the school and towards the community. It is only when teachers understand the richness of the Mexican-American heritage and develop genuine empathy for other cultures that they can begin to teach.

FOREWORD

FIRST PAPERS ON MIGRANCY AND RURAL POVERTY: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE EDUCATION OF MEXICAN-AMERICANS IN RURAL AREAS

There are 11 million "invisible" Americans. They are the rural poor. Theirs is the culture of poverty. Their unseen legions include more than two million Spanish-speaking, Mexican-American migrant farm workers who live in the five Southwestern states. Though the culture of poverty cuts across all other cultures (hunger and hopelessness are great equalizers) these low-income Mexican-Americans face uniquely complex problems. Often they do not speak English; their children are virtually untouched by existing school programs; their lack of job skills and the increasing technification of agriculture lead them, inevitably, to become clients of social welfare agencies. Rootless, socially and economically disoriented, they represent a tragic loss in human resources.

Teacher Corps: Rural-Migrant at the University of Southern California strongly believes that teacher education programs must take the initiative in developing realistic new approaches to the education process, if there is to be an escape hatch from the life-style that is poverty.

And so we have developed a highly innovative, challenging two-year teacher training program that is already proving itself workable in reaching and teaching the children of poverty. A pre-service orientation period is followed by "live" experiences in school and community activities. Professors commute the 200 miles from USC to the Tulare County project site (in California's San Joaquin Valley) so interns can complete university coursework in the realistic setting of school and community. At the conclusion of the intensive two-year program, candidates are qualified to receive the Master of Science Degree in Education, the Certificate to Teach

English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and a California Teaching Credential in elementary or secondary education.

The pre-service phase of this program has been designed to create understanding of differences between cultures and to define the teacher's newly emerging role as a translator of community expectations...a friend who knows his way around the culture...for Spanish-speaking migrant and seasonal farm workers and others who are disadvantaged.

Guest lecturers representing a variety of educational disciplines, programs, and agencies were invited to participate in the pre-service orientation. These "First Papers on Rural Poverty and Migrancy" are a compendium of their presentations. We feel they will be of widespread interest to those concerned with the educational needs of families who follow the crops.

The papers are presented in separate interest areas; socio-cultural-attitudinal characteristics of migrants and the impact of education; theories and realities of the migrant condition as viewed by various agencies and programs; and the development of cultural understanding and empathy through an awareness of and sensitivity to the problems of those who are culturally "different." A bibliography, and others will be published at later dates.

These materials were prepared for publication by Shirley Josephs, Coordinator of Program Development for Teacher Corps: Rural-Migrant, assisted by Harriet Borson and Mary Heiman.

Patricia Heffernan Cabrera
Director, Teacher Corps: Rural-Migrant
University of Southern California

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NEEDED: "TURNED ON" TEACHERS

Richard A. Graham
Executive Director, Teacher Corps

You can't get a job in Peace Corps to teach in Latin America unless you know the language and the culture. But you can work in almost any school in America with Spanish-speaking kids and you don't have to know the language or the culture.

You can't teach in Latin America until you've learned the language because you can't reach the kids and you can't connect with the parents. You can't get along in the community. You won't understand.

Without Spanish, you won't understand much of our Southwest either and you won't be understood. You won't be a teacher because your kids won't learn. The facts are there for anyone to see. Spanish-speaking kids aren't learning. Fewer Spanish-speaking kids get a decent education in America than any other comparable group.

If we are capable of learning what it takes to teach in Peru, we are capable of learning what's needed to teach in Palito Blanco, Texas. There's only one purpose for the HILT program. It's to show that teachers and would-be teachers can be taught language and its culture at a cost that any school system can afford and that the cost to the children is so great if you don't that no school system can afford not to have teachers who speak the language.

There are lots of unsolved problems in education. The way to reach Spanish-speaking youngsters is not one of them. In our black ghettos, many families are torn apart. The schools aren't sure yet whether they are capable of bringing order to disordered young lives. School systems are only beginning to learn how to recognize and accept ghetto English as a second language.

These aren't problems with most Spanish-speaking children. There is a strong family. There is a magnificent language and one of the world's great cultures. There are no great problems to be solved. The only problem is to stop creating them.

It is pretty well accepted that kids learn because they want to, because they expect to, because others expect them to. Too many kids, far too many kids from Spanish-speaking homes, don't learn, don't expect to, aren't expected to.

The teachers who don't expect them to learn, know their business. They know that kids whose language and culture are denied get turned off, get turned inward and then get turned out.

Seventy percent get turned out in some areas. Dr. Thomas Carter of the University of Texas at El Paso estimates that close to seventy percent of Mexican-American children in Texas do not finish high school. According to Office of Education estimates, there are less than 5,000 teachers in the United States who are properly trained to reach out to Spanish-speaking children and their families -- and the need is for some 100,000.

HILT isn't the answer. This fine program that the University of Southern California has developed for the Teacher Corps is not the answer. But it can prove that there is an answer. The purpose of HILT is to prove that it is within the means of school systems in Spanish-speaking areas to require their teachers to know Spanish and its culture. The purpose of HILT is to convince teacher training institutions that they are derelict, that they are unnecessarily dooming thousands of children to a half life -- if they don't train teachers to reach children and their parents.

And if teachers can learn to reach out to Spanish-speaking children and parents, so can school administrators, vocational teachers and on-the-job trainers.

Hundreds of thousands of children can have an opportunity for a better life. All that is required is the decision to do so. I hope that you have helped to show the way in this training program. And I hope that you'll continue to show that it's worth the investment by the job that you do in your schools and communities.

THE MOST IMPORTANT ADVANTAGE

Armando Rodriquez
Chief, Mexican-American Affairs Unit
U.S. Office of Education

There are no such things as disadvantaged kids. This has been the bag of the Mexican-American. He is tabbed as disadvantaged. It is the opposite that is true. It is the schools that are disadvantaged. American education has failed to communicate with Mexican-American kids. It has created barriers to learning based on differences in language. We don't have kids who are dumb, disadvantaged, poor learners. We just have a school system that has failed to teach them. We have an educational system that hasn't trained teachers to understand other cultures; it hasn't given them the equipment or the training necessary to communicate with the Mexican-American.

You represent the first generation of teachers who will have the tools to be the real catalysts between the school and the Mexican-American community. You will have that most important advantage to bring to the Mexican-American kid...communication and understanding.

I'm not asking you to act like missionaries. I don't want you to love these kids. I want you to teach them! Don't try to substitute your failure to teach with love. If you fail to teach, find out why.

As members of Teacher Corps and pioneers in HILT (High Intensity Language Training) you have been given a chance to become leaders in bilingual education, to effectively demonstrate the Teacher Corps goal of bringing innovation and change to the classroom. The success of this program will open the door to future bilingual education programs. Teacher Corps has provided the impetus. But we are a long way from accomplishment.

In order to comply with even the minimum processes necessary to educate Mexican-American children, we must train 100,000 bilingual teachers. We need these teachers to eliminate our monolingual and monocultural society; we need to promote cultural pluralism in our schools.

Bilingual education is not just a project for learning a foreign language (in this case, Spanish). It is the first step toward gaining experience and knowledge that make it possible for you to bridge the gap between languages and cultures, to facilitate successful entry into the school environment for the Mexican-American child. Bilingual education is another tool for being a better teacher, a better citizen, a better American.

We must use the Mexican-American cultural heritage to rich advantage in our educational system. This country has assumed the monocultural and monolingual role for generations. We have always stripped our immigrants of their language and culture and expected them to conform to our customs and traditions...to the American way of life. We must recognize the contributions of other cultures to the American heritage and must stop trying to blot out differences. We must stop trying to maintain a monolingual, monocultural society.

There are 5-1/2 million Mexican-Americans, 1-1/2 million Puerto Ricans, half a million Cubans and other Spanish-speaking citizens .. a total of 7 million citizens .. who, for the most part, bring bilingualism as an asset to our culture. This is an asset that we Americans need to recognize and adopt.

The Bilingual Education Act was a national moral and legal commitment for bilingualism. Bilingualism must become as common as tacos and frijoles, apple pie and french fries. It must become as common in our schools as reading and arithmetic, as common in government as law and order, as common in

business as the use of computor data. Bilingual education in every school in the country is the vehicle for fulfilling this national commitment.

What is your role? With bilingual education and cultural understanding, you are equipped to do the job. You will be leaders in the field of bilingual education, the forerunners. But you are going into a field of disbelievers. They will be doubters. They will be threatened because you speak two languages. They will suspect you. But, if you have commitment, you will provide leadership. It is going to be a tough hard fight. You have a massive selling job to do. You will have to be persuasive salesmen.

Your classroom successes may hopefully bring about many changes in teacher preparation programs. The training institutions may finally prepare teachers to teach real kids instead of distributing credentials to people to function in mythical classrooms. You in Teacher Corps can do more to bring change rapidly and forcefully than any new text books used by monolingual, monocultural teachers. You are the pioneers who are going to show that the job can be done -- that with cultural understanding it is possible to teach and to teach all kids with cultural understanding -- through bilingual education.

A PLAN FOR HILT...HIGH INTENSIVE LANGUAGE TRAINING

Patricia Cabrera, University of Southern California
Director, HILT
Director, Program for Teachers of English
to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

It is vital that teacher unite with child, not only in matters of the mind, but also through the dynamics of human interaction. Teacher Corps interns who are working in the West and Southwest are in a unique position as primary agents for bringing education into the realm of possibility for many disadvantaged youth: they have the time, the talent, and the desire to serve this segment of the educational population. But they must be able to communicate with the child, with the child's parents, and with the child's societal world. If the child's cultural and linguistic orientation is different from the teacher's orientation, it is the irrevocable responsibility of the teacher to reach and teach that child in his cultural setting, as he functions in his language community. The Teacher Corps intern...and any other teacher attempting to educate others...through the utilization of language and cultural differences and all the other tools at his command... must be able to link the public school to the child's world as a positive institutional system. The school thus emerges as a humanistic influence and becomes recognized as the agency ready to elevate each human being.

If the public school is indeed to become such a change agent, it is essential that teachers become proficient in the child's language and empathic towards his culture. To assist Teacher Corps interns, as well as others in the future, Teacher Corps: Rural-Migrant of the University of Southern California's School of Education, in cooperation with the Unit for Mexican-American Affairs and the Bureau of Educational Research, developed a

High Intensive Language Training Program (HILT) in Spanish. The primary goal of the six-week program: to provide special training for non-Spanish-speaking teacher-interns who will be teaching Mexican-American children in the classroom and interacting with their parents in community and school-related activities.

The sixty participants in this pilot program, which was based on Peace Corps Models, came from Teacher Corps programs at New Mexico State University, University of Missouri at Kansas City, and University of the Pacific, as well as from USC.

Program Design

Special consideration, in the development of the program, was given to the following:

1. That the language component be developed with direct impact potentials

The knowledge of language is an important tool in communicating, and concerns should be directed to the use of language to meet language problems as they exist in educational situations. Too often, language is taught in a vacuum. Although of importance in itself, there must be a vehicle to bring the use of this skill and knowledge to where it can be most beneficial. To this extent, the marriage of teacher education and speakers of Spanish in a single training effort, brings new resources to the place of greatest need, the child and family presently isolated from communication.

Too often, the training of people to either speak Spanish or to become qualified teachers, have not been related, except in "after the fact" institutes. In addition, introducing language proficiency in the early training period of teachers should diminish many areas of misunderstanding and

negative attitudes which many teachers develop and which can be directly traced to the inability to communicate and, therefore, to be understood.

2. That language and culture be considered as one effort

As language is a tool developing from and contributing to a culture, a HILT program will need to be related heavily to the culture of the target group, in this instance, a Spanish-speaking Mexican-Americans. A major theme of the pre-service phase of the program, prior to the teacher-intern's entry into the intensive language experience, should be to develop an understanding of cultural mores and values and all the various ways in which language becomes an inter-cultural communicant. In the Intensive Language Program, experiences will be included which will help the intern understand and relate the ways in which culture shapes and influences attitudes as well as behaviors. This should include an awareness of the similarities as well as the differences in cultures.

3. That there be administrative support for the training effort and potential program outcomes

In the nature and design of the Teacher Corps program, interns are immediately and directly involved in schools and in the community. Many of their early efforts are to develop special classes for children and for parent programs. One would anticipate that interns coming to High Intensive Language Training would learn to develop teaching and community strategies using their new language proficiency, and that they would need administrative support to introduce new ideas in the local school districts to which they will be assigned.

School administrators such as Program Coordinators and Principals were invited to be involved in the pre-service orientation phase of the Intensive Language Experience. Just as a common language enhances communication,

common experiences enhance future relationships, thereby providing the potential for initiation of new efforts and implementation of innovative programs.

4. That a follow-through and heritage effect result from the pre-service effort

Too often programs lose their initial impact and develop diminishing returns, unless reinforced periodically. The pre-service program should be designed to blend naturally into in-service efforts, to continue developing language proficiency and to relate it to teaching strategies and other related educational situations.

The project which Teacher Corps: Rural-Migrant wrote was called: "A Proposal for the Development of a Model for Short-Term-High-Intensive-Language Training in Spanish for Non-Spanish Speakers Which Can Be Replicated in Other Teacher Education Programs Involved in the Training of Teachers Who Work With Children of Native-Spanish-Speaking Environments." It was based on the hypothesis that teachers who will be working with children of Spanish-speaking environments in the West and Southwest will be able to learn enough Spanish in a six-week period to be able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements, if involved in a high intensive language training program.

The staff selection and training, isolated training site, rotation scheduling, and psychological preparation of participants were geared toward the format previously used by the Peace Corps for similar training.

The materials used for the USC HILT project were developed especially for the program. They were designed for the development of teacher-parent-home-school community communication, utilizing micro-wave and flexible frame formats, as well as such devices as action-scripts, dramatizations, dialogues,

role-playing and other techniques. It was felt that no existing basic language text provides a sufficient range of materials for a high-intensity language program, therefore the development of original materials was considered a primary element of the innovative program. In addition to being linguistically sound, the language materials, it was felt, must be interesting, realistic, and relevant to the area in which the interns would be teaching.

Major features of a high-intensity program are:

1. A focus on language learning, with other activities introduced only if profitably integrated into that environment.

2. Immediate use of the target language among trainees and staff, in and out of class.

3. Approximately eight language class hours daily, plus language-oriented activities outside the classroom.

4. Intense staff involvement in all aspects of the language program.

A variety of factors are said to contribute to the success of the high-intensity approach to language learning. These include:

1. Rapid Achievement. A large number of language hours in a relatively short time produces faster and more apparent proficiency gains than the same number of hours extended over a longer time span. Trainees are often surprised by their success. (This hypothesis is still open to question because of limited data.)

2. Early Communication in the Target Language. From the program's beginning, language is the practical means of communication, rather than an academic exercise unto itself.

3. Individualized Attention. The small instructor-trainee ratio (maximum of 6 students to one instructor), close supervision of classes,

frequent regrouping, and special attention to individual learning difficulties, convey to the trainees the concern of staff members for the progress of each individual, as well as the language program's overall quality.

4. Staff Involvement. Trainees are aware of the hard work and interest of language instructors and other training staff, and make a maximum effort in view of such commitment.

Evaluation

Evaluation of language-proficiency was achieved through pre-testing and post-testing. The program was designed to develop the limited working proficiency to be able to score S-2 on the language rating scales developed by the Foreign Service Institute. This is described as..."Can handle with confidence but not facility most social situations including introductions and causal conversations about current events, one's work, family and autobiographical information....simple instructions to students...can understand most conversations on non-technical subjects...has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to express himself simply..."

For four weeks, interns lived at St. Anthony's Franciscan Brothers' Retreat in rural Three Rivers, California, an idyllic yet isolated location in the Sierra Foothills of Sequoia National Park. They spent eight hours a day in a rigorous instructional routine. The following schedule of an intern's typical day at Three Rivers is indicative of the tight-paced, carefully structured instructional program, with its built-in provisions for total immersion in Spanish:

6:45-7:00	a.m.	Coffee and Juice
7:00-8:00		Class with instructors (4-6 students per instructor)
8:00-8:45		Breakfast with instructors and language assistants
8:45-10:15		Class with instructors
10:15-10:30		Coffee Break
10:30-11:15		Class with language assistants
11:15-12:30		Class with instructors
12:30-1:30	p.m.	Lunch with instructors and language assistants
1:30-3:00		Recreation and rest; activities with language assistants (swimming, volleyball, basketball, etc.; linguistic games (Spanish scrabble, charades, etc.)
3:00-3:45		Class with language assistants
3:45-5:15		Class with instructors
5:15-6:00		Class with language assistants
6:00-7:00		Dinner with instructors and language assistants
7:00		Evening activities: Spanish films, folk singing, dancing, games and cards, talent show, Sangria party, Market Day, trips to the communities.

Interns in HILT investigated the causes of cultural alienation and failure to communicate and thereby to learn through the use of traditional classroom techniques. The validation of the hypothesis, through follow-up evaluation will allow for replication of the model in other teacher training programs concerned with bilingual education. To all intents and purposes, we were successful. And so, HILT must surely add a new dimension to the definition of TEACHER and to the dynamics of human interaction. When man has learned to hear and understand his fellow man, he develops the capacity to learn.

THE EDUCATION GAP: WHY MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN FAIL IN SCHOOL

Dr. Uvaldo Palomares
Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology,
San Diego State College;
Staff Member, Institute for Human Development, La Jolla

Over the past thirty years the education gap between the Chicano and the Negro has increased. The gap between the education the Chicano receives and the education the white man receives has increased even more. The majority of the Mexican-Americans, particularly in rural communities, are vocationally untrained and functionally illiterate.

The teachers in the schools say, "The Negroes are bad with their rioting and fighting, but I love the Mexicans with their big brown eyes. I think they are wonderful." I have one question -- If you love them so much, why don't you educate them as if they are going to be your future sons and daughters-in-law, rather than as if they are going to be your future shoeshine boys? Why not educate them so that they are equipped to go out and support themselves adequately?

I think that to a large extent the poor educational progress of the Mexican-American is perpetuated by a mentality that doesn't have to be the way it is. The white man has enough money now so that he can offer knowledge to all. Instead, he concentrates on educating the squeaky wheel. He could lubricate all four wheels, but his philosophy is that if it doesn't squeak loudly enough, the problem isn't bad enough. We concentrate on curing things after they have happened, not on prevention. It is more than just inertia. It is hypocrisy. The problem is not the lack of money. The problem is values, attitudes, and pre-conceived notions. In this country we can afford good education for everyone.

Passivity of the Mexican-American

To my way of thinking, the mentality of the Anglo is geared toward mastery over the environment, not toward the humanistic point of view. Power is the language that the Anglo establishment understands.

My biggest battle is trying to get the Mexican-American to understand why he feels as he does. Why has he bought the passivity line for so long? Why does he see himself as manana and passive? Why does he accept tokenism, where favors are bestowed in the form of a few better jobs or a scholarship? When will he wise up, as the Negro has wised up?

The real question is whether or not he is really capable of asserting himself at some point. Can he do this aggressively, forcefully, and physically? I believe that he can. His grandparents were the revolutionists in Mexico. They were the poor people who won the war against the aristocracy by fighting in their own way. La Huelga* is a typically Mexican movement, not an Anglicized or Negro style movement. The flags, the music, the pilgrimage to Sacramento to see Governor Brown -- perhaps I would not have led it that way, but it is a successful movement. How the leaders do it is up to them. The need is there.

Role of the Teacher

Your role will be a dual role. One is as a teacher and one is as a member of the community. Your first area of responsibility is to the children, of course, but the teacher who only teaches and doesn't operate in the community is living in a sterile environment. Only by influencing the power and political structure will you be able to help the children on a long-term basis.

---

* La Huelga - On Easter Sunday Cesar Chavez led the farm workers on a march to Sacramento in order to protest farm labor conditions in California to Governor Edmund G. Brown.

Assuming this dual role is not easy. When you do, you can begin to lose the battle of the faculty lounge and become an outcast at school. This might not be so bad if you were really integrated and could move into the midst of the minority group. But you have no guarantee that the minority group will accept you either. You may find yourself alienated from both groups. To cope with such a situation, you need to have a deep-seated philosophical understanding of who you are and what you are about. You need to know the people. You need to know the community. You need to be clear about your aspirations and your limitations. I hope that you can emerge from your training seeing your role within the total spectrum of education, but even so you will have to re-evaluate the situation once you are actually in the field. You don't want to move too quickly, but neither should you get bent out of shape waiting for the right time to become involved.

Role in the Community

The children in the classroom will reflect the attitudes of their parents. The Texas Mexican is looked down upon by the California Mexican. The local Mexican looks down on the migrant Mexican. There is a great deal of friction between the groups and very little interaction. Their cultures are different and there is open hostility in some instances. This is the kind of in-fighting in which you must not get involved. If you do, you'll find yourself and your energies channeled into coping with personalities and personal affairs.

You will have to learn to work with the leaders of the Mexican-Americans. Many times when these leaders emerge, they emerge strongly, vocally and aggressively. There are good, strong leaders and you will be comfortable working with them. There are others who will confuse you. They

may oppose every program that is introduced to aid the Mexican-Americans, and you have to understand the reason for this. Frequently they are the people who by determination and hard work have managed to move from the lowest economic group to the lower middle class. The husband and wife both work. They have two steady incomes and two cars. Perhaps their child is in pre-school. When the government comes in with programs for the poor, such as a Headstart, they find themselves ineligible. They must continue to pay tuition, but the next-door neighbor who has never exerted any effort to raise his standard of living sends his child free. They resent it and they become a strong and vocal opposing force to many projects. But don't write these people off. In many cases they are actually going through an evolution. At first their values are more middle-class than the middle-class. Then gradually, they begin to question, and finally, to act. Some of our leaders, our really good leaders, have evolved through these stages. You may be confronted by those in the first stage, and they will anger and frustrate you. I can only advise you to exercise patience and conserve yourself for the battle with the power structure -- the school, the local government, etc.

Role in the Classroom

To understand the attitude of the children you will teach, you must understand the attitude of their parents toward education. The migrant Mexican-American parents value education, but they just don't understand what school is all about. They think nothing of keeping children home for a day to run errands. The middle-class Mexicans have extremely high aspirations for their children, such as medicine and law. But they have no real understanding of what is involved in achieving these aspirations, and so the pressures they place on their children are tremendous. The children are

severely punished for bad grades. If an Anglo child is doing poorly, his parents help him with his school work, but usually the Mexican-American parents don't know enough themselves to help the children.

We have found in working with Mexican-American children that the better the self-concept, the higher the degree of education the child achieves. In one district the starting school population was 50 to 60% Mexican-American. The graduating class had only a 10% Mexican-American ratio. The school admitted that the undesirables just seemed to drop out. In the beginning the Mexican-American children think that they are pretty good. But as they advance they begin to feel more and more inadequate.

What is the school doing to make these kids feel this way? In preschool, kindergarten and first grade the children are not aware of any great differences in grouping. There is no real failure, and each child is treated as an individual. At the second-grade level the phenomenon of the group range begins. In the third grade the giant step is taken. The teacher has prescribed subjects to teach, there are certain spelling lists to be learned, certain phases of mathematics to master. More and more the child who does not learn begins to feel estranged from the rest of the class. The children in the books look different, the teacher doesn't talk about his kind of background, there is no historical context to which he can relate. He gets little individual attention. He is left out, he begins to fall behind, and there is the concurrent drop in self-esteem. The next crucial point is at the sixth and seventh-grade level. There is further de-emphasis of the individual and greater emphasis on the curriculum and material.

Too many teachers accept the regimentation and the rigidity in curricula as being necessities. They feel that it is their job to teach the majority of the class, and for the minority who cannot seem to learn, they substitute

discipline. When the inattentive child has reached the third grade, the teacher says, "I know he has a problem, but I just can't take care of it." In the sixth or seventh grade the teacher says, "I teach subjects, not kids. If he can't dig it, that's his problem. It's not my problem." In high school they're shouting this axiom from the rooftop, and if you say to start teaching where the child is, you will be challenged vehemently.

Building Self-Esteem

How can you, as a teacher, work to change the system? How can you treat the children differently, make them feel better about themselves, keep them from losing all their self-esteem? I believe that the teacher's values and attitudes have a tremendous bearing on how well the children achieve. Many times a great deal can be accomplished by just sitting and talking with the children. They may ask you questions like: "Hey, how do you know so much?", or "How much do you earn?", or "What is a teacher really like?" If they see you as a god, the distance between you and the children is so great that they feel you are beyond reach. If you can humanize yourself and make yourself understandable to them, you can accomplish more than in any lesson. Once you have de-sanctified yourself, they can begin to learn from you.

You must also learn from them. You must understand them, understand their background, their living conditions. Do you know what it is like to live in a house like theirs? Grind your teeth together. It feels smooth, doesn't it? I remember when I was a kid I could never grind my teeth without the crunch of grit or sand. It was everywhere. It blew in through the cracks in the windows and up through the floor boards of the house. You have to have experienced poverty to really know what it is like, but at least make the effort to understand how it is to be as poor as these children are.

You can alter the curriculum to fit them. You can even let the Mexicans win the Battle of the Alamo. You can take the importance of the Mexican in history and emphasize it. Bring out the fact that the agricultural work of this state has been done by the Mexican-Americans. You can stress how important this work is to feed the nation. Talk about the modern contributions of the Mexicans. Tell them their people's strengths so that their self-image will improve. Give them a sense of belonging to the school. The state now has texts written in English and Spanish. Teach them to read in Spanish.

On the subject of language, I would like to interject a cautionary word. A lot of people have the idea that with Mexican-American children the solution to all problems is language. If you teach them English, you have solved their problems. The truth is that the language problem is but a superficial coating over a much deeper problem which encompasses culture, self-concept, attitudes, and values. It is an important aspect of the overall problem, but learning to speak English is no answer.

When I was in the fifth grade a boy named Ben came into our class. Ben had just moved to our school from Mexico City. His father was an engineer and Ben had been brought up in a Mexican middle-class family. He had been to good schools and he was familiar with the ins-and-outs of the learning process. His only problem here was that he could not speak a work of English. I, on the other hand, had been born in this country, but I did not come from a home like Ben's. As Ben learned the language he made great progress in school. In two years he learned more than I had learned in the whole time I had been in school. He had had all the prerequisities for learning built into him. I had not. It's not just the language problem. It includes the gathering of information, comprehension, the ability to

handle symbolic reproduction -- all of these are important in the learning process. Most important of all is the feeling the child has about himself.

Testing and How to Use It

I would like to talk with you about the intellectual development of the Mexican-American rural-migrant children. The measures we have to test the development of these children tests a sampling of their environment which is really unfair to them. The test that I use for Anglo-American children is the Stanford Binet, but it is largely a verbal test and therefore doesn't work for the Mexican-American children. When you see a Stanford-Binet score on a Mexican-American child's record, use it to find out what areas he is deficient in, but for heaven's sake don't pay attention to the score. It is probably very low. The test is unfair to that child because it measures what he does not know rather than what he knows. The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, although still unfair to this particular child, is the better of the two, in terms of exploring his intellectual ability.

The WISC IQ Test is composed of two sub-sections. One is a verbal section. We have found that in this area of the test, the part which tests the information they have, the comprehension, their arithmetic ability, their ability to find relationships between words, their ability to repeat numbers forwards or backwards, these children do badly. They score very low on all the parts except the digit repetition. What does this tell you about the need of the child as far as what you are going to contribute? The child needs to know his environment. He needs information. Give him information. Have plenty of magazines in your classrooms. Plan field trips. Take these children to the post-office, to the local newspaper, to the corner grocery store. Talk to them about your childhood and the house you lived in. Give

them the background they want about the way Anglos live. The middle-class child has subliminally been exposed to information from many sources. He is taken on trips, he sees books, he hears his parents' discussions.

In the area of comprehension these children are quite capable of dealing with the knowledge and the information that they have. In spite of the fact that they are ill-informed, the information that they do have they use rather well.

The score in arithmetic usually is a low one because they can't handle arithmetic that is associated with words. They can conceptualize numbers, quantities, amounts, and geometic figures, but as soon as you associate language with these factors it becomes very difficult for them.

In the area of similarities they score low because it requires a lot of information and knowledge of words and concepts. They are not prepared for this type of questioning.

In the area of digit repetition, these children usually do very well. Their memories are good, and they are able to repeat. The fact that they score well here speaks for their innate abilities.

Vocabulary consistently hampers their ability. Somehow our entire educational system is based on vocabulary, and these children just do not have a sufficient knowledge of words. Most children by the age of five or six know what they need to know in order to start achieving in school with the English language. They have the structure of the language. They know and can use the conjunctive words needed to connect nouns. Therefore, our schools have never taught this. All they teach is vocabulary. The problem is that most Mexican-American children don't have the structure or the sound of the language when they enter school. They have spoken Spanish at home, not English. When they enter the classroom and fail to get the structure

there, they learn vocabulary in isolation. And so these children tend to average between 70 and 80 I.Q. in the verbal area. This does not mean that they have that kind of an I.Q., but rather that they are very low in their ability to handle the English-speaking conceptual world. You will have to supplement their education in a way that will remedy their deficiency in this area because without this ability they will not be able to compete in our society.

In the non-verbal area of the WISC the migrant child also tends to score low, but not as low as in the verbal areas. Many times his score is within the normal range. However, even in this area his ability still is not what it could be. I think this is because in his home he does not have the perceptual and conceptual experiences of other children with the items that are used in the test. His experiences are with other things, but in order to succeed in school you have to have perceptual experiences with this type of item. Your job is to fulfill this need.

I hope that you will insist on seeing the tests that these children have taken. But when you evaluate the test, do it critically. When you find a Mexican-American child who scores well on an information part, investigate. You may find that he comes from a very middle-class home.

You might be interested in my own school experience in terms of how it relates to the comments I have just made. In kindergarten I was categorized as being hyper-active, flighty and emotionally disturbed. I finally calmed down, and I became slow and deliberate. I seemed to forget easily. My eyes were dull. So after they had held me back three years in the second grade, they tested me. I scored 60 on the verbal, 70 on the non-verbal and scored an I.Q. of 68. I was promptly placed in the dumb-bell class. At that time they didn't have EMR classes, but this was the equivalent. These teachers

really thought I was retarded, and I thought I was dumb. In junior high school I started to do well in the subjects that interested me. I continued this pattern in high school. One of the last comments about me in high school was "...has high degree of mechanical ability -- should train to be a mechanic."

Essentially what I am saying to you is that you have the power to influence the lives of children negatively and therefore to ruin their lives. By the virtue of saying that, I am telling you that you also have the opposite power. I am a realistic pessimist. But I am optimistic about what teachers can do. You have a great burden of responsibility, but I have faith that you will be able to measure up to it. I am counting on you.

THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE

Dr. Julian Nava
Member, Board of Education, Los Angeles City Schools
Professor of History, Valley State College, Los Angeles

Five to ten years ago it would have been inconceivable for me to talk to a group such as this one concerning the problems of Mexican-American education. The longer we look at the problems, the more complex they become. The problems have always been there, but now people have raised their voices. You are not alone in looking at these problems. There are thousands who are now realizing how difficult it is to make an impact on the problems of the Mexican-Americans.

As I look at the books that appear in print every year that are relative to my own field of Latin history, I cannot help but realize that there are virtually no books appearing on the Mexican-American. There are scores of good ones on other racial and ethnic groups. And so I am now working on a general adult history of the Mexican-American and on an eighth grade text book. My point in mentioning this is that I have progressed painfully slowly in my writing, but, as slow as I am moving, I still think mine will be the first book published on the subject. In short, we are dealing with a scarcity of material that applies to this group. This group is less identifiable than the American Negro. It is the dearth of published materials concerning who and what the Mexican-American is that is the handicap.

The Negro is 100% American. Culturally he is 100% American and he has made profound and widespread inroads into American history. The Mexican-American is not less American, but rather he is something else besides. He is bi-cultural and bi-lingual. This bi-cultural, bi-lingual hang up is as important to the Mexican-American as color has been to the Negro.

Two men who have studied the adjustment of minorities in the United States are John Higham and Oscar Handlin. Higham, dealing with ideas, has done a study of the American Character. Handlin writes of the ordinary man in the ghetto. His book, "The Uprooted," concerning the southern European immigrant who moved to the United States has an impact that will be with us indefinitely.

Higham discusses the development by the 1840's of the quirks, traits, and characteristics of American society which he calls "nativism."* He says that this developed during the 1790's and early decades of the 1800's and was an attempt to preserve the characteristics that led to the American Revolution and independence. The Americans imposed their attitudes and values on the earliest immigrants to this country. These attitudes were Antlo-Saxon in origin -- what we would call WASP (White Anglo Saxon Protestant) today -- and these people became the dominant group. The founders of this country were highly socially stratified. They were the first "Establishment." The early immigrant groups were small enough in number that the attitudes and values of the "Establishment" could be imposed upon them. By the time the Europeans flooded the United States after the Civil War, we had a society structured and formed and the immigrants conformed to it. Cocky, self-assured, belligerent, and sublimely confident -- these are the traits of nativism. To the American mind the American culture assumed superiority over all the other cultures in the world.

What this all means in regard to the Mexican-American now as well as 100 years ago is that when the two cultures met, i.e., nativism and the Spanish Catholic culture, you had more than simply a clash of cultures. You

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*John Higham, Strangers in the Land; Patterns of American Nativism 1800-1925, Rutgers U. Press, New Brunswick

had an irreparable conflict. The attitudes formed by the American pioneers about the Spanish were derogatory, and the Spanish felt the same way toward the American. The Americans had no feeling either of responsibility or guilt as far as treaties or other agreements made with "inferior" groups. When the pioneers moved west, it was not unusual that there was animosity resulting from these cultural conflicts. There was assimilation, one into the other group. But you had the built-in hostility that manifested itself in so many ways towards the end of the 19th century.

We have never lost a war and history is usually written by the victor. Thus the entire history of the Southwest is described in terms of the conqueror and the conquered at every level: the Protestant over the Catholic, freedom of thought over authoritarianism, democracy over monarchy, Caucasian over the darker skinned people. In general, it describes a people who were aggressive, revolutionary, and innovating as against the traditionalist, authoritarian society.

The Mexican-American society is one that places more emphasis on adaptiveness and acceptance than on change. There is more concern with life after death than with the here and now. This is what established caste and class and role. When the Mexican-American has resisted the assigned role, he has had to have cunning or luck, money or political power. Most did not have this and so they fell into the categories assigned to them.

At the time of the Mexican-American War the Mexican government was attempting to break up the large missions' titles and give homestead rights to the people. The government gave the Indians on the missions freedom and gave them a share of the land. When the Americans took over the Southwest, they superimposed a county land system which provided English land measurements and titles. The Mexican-Americans owned vast areas of land and lost

this land in the transfer to American authority because they did not understand the English language, laws or ways.

So you have in the Mexican-American, from the start, a mixed breed of Spanish and Indian -- dispossessed of land, conquered in war, yet indispensable for many years as a worker on the land. He withdrew into himself as slaves turn into themselves. He learned to say "Si, señor," and to swallow his pride, and to accept the attitude of the Americans.

This is the history and the heritage of the Mexican-American. For years he was the mainstay of handicraft and farm labor. In some counties he was forbidden to vote or faced insurmountable opposition. Alienated, cynical, discouraged -- exhibiting before long the stereotype of the Mexican-American as developed by the Anglo-American.

There were the refugee Mexican-Americans vs. the resident Mexican-Americans. For many, residence in the United States was transitory. My own family came here fleeing from the violence of revolution. When conditions of revolution in Mexico became impossible, parents insisted that their young sons and daughters go north. My mother came to Texas in this way and met my father. Father always expected to go back to Mexico. He went to Fresno to pick fruit. He went up and down California picking fruit. Forty-two years later my parents still lived in California although my father was a Mexican resident until the day he died. Mexico was his country. My mother finally became a citizen. I became an American in school as did my brothers and sisters.

The Mexican-American is difficult to understand because he is many things. From personal testimony I know that the schools are used to melt everyone together and that has been a mixed blessing. Imposing the Anglo-Saxon values on all creates problems. In a sense, it is a good idea, but it

could be done in a different way. The school could deal separately with factors that affect only the Mexican-American, the Irish, the Jew, the Negro.

Now we have a new ball game that started after World War II. Although Mexico still sends in more immigrants than any other country, immigration from Mexico has levelled off. In a few years there will be a quota system for Latin American states, but if you have family here you will be quota exempt. According to the U. S. Labor Department there are practically no braceros, but there are hundreds of thousands of "green carders" (aliens who enter the United States on work permits at the discretion of the Secretary of Labor). These workers are being transported further and further from the borders.

Where do these workers come from? The cities? Anyone from Mexico City who is well adjusted there would be an idiot to come to the United States. Most come from the farm lands and country side where regional differences of dialects and skills survive and so we are looking at many varieties of Mexicans. Simply by proximity there is a constant supply of these new Americans.

When we look at the progress that has been made and become depressed, it is because we are always looking at different Mexican-Americans. The average residency in the barrios averages perhaps ten years. The people become assimiliated and move out. Then others move into the barrios.

You are working with the migrants -- a changing breed. Groups like you fasten your safety belts. You have a long ride and a rough ride. As long as Mexico is next door we are going to get brand new Mexican-Americans. You will never be out of a job. Unlike some of the problems with other immigrant groups, this is an on-going situation. The renaissance and rise of Mexican culture will steadily wipe away the historical image of the Mexican. The

Mexicans in Mexico are proud of their heritage and anxious to spread their new pride. They are more outspoken and more effective. Their education is beginning to catch up to their sensitivity.

"THE INVISIBLE POOR": THE WORLD OF THE MIGRANT

Ralph Guzman
Assistant Director UCLA Mexican-American Study Project

The majority of the Mexican-American people live in Urban ghettoes throughout the southwest. But there are a few -- perhaps 20 per cent -- who remain in rural areas. These are America's displaced persons. The nearly forgotten Spanish speaking poor. The quality of their poverty is desperate.

It is easy to forget these few who till and harvest the crops. They are not always socially visible. You can't see them unless you leave the main highways and thoroughfares of our country. I would like to tell you how we, in the Mexican-American study project, found these poor; how we validated ourselves to them, and what we learned about their style of life.

I first became concerned with this group while working with the California State Commission for Compensatory Education. Great amounts of federal monies were meant to help the migrants--to equip them for a better life. The programs were well-meaning, but not realistic. Too often we had approached them with notions of what was best for them. Sometimes we found that those who wanted to do the teaching and the helping really did not know what they were talking about. Few had ever visited the migrant poor.

Census information and superficial surveys do not reflect the true conditions of life. What the migrants really experience is not contained in census documents or hastily conceived surveys. To better understand the dreams, the expectations and the frustrations of these people it is necessary to live among them. This has been a long ignored thesis here in the United States. Teachers, for example, are often afraid to live among

the Mexican poor. They don't know Mexicans as people; what is not known is feared and despised.

Peace Corps Volunteers were required to live among the poor in Latin America. For example, they lived in barrios of Chimbote, Peru--a desolate, unhappy community of poverty. Volunteers learned a great deal about human misery; some suffered illness and other discomfort but they were thus better able to serve the poor. Very little hard data was gathered. The Peace Corps kids did learn about people as they were -- not as the training camp personnel thought that they were -- or wished that they were. As Americans our volunteers came back richer, in terms of human compassion and understanding, for having lived among the poor of Peru. I believe that the Peace Corps experience was valuable and that it should be replicated in our country.

We tested the Peace Corps model in the migrant camps of California. Instead of Anglo, middle class Peace Corpsmen we used Mexican-American middle class graduate students. Twelve of them moved into 18 selected migrant camps in the Central Valley.

We received a grant of $18,000 from the office of Economic Opportunity. Our research began in August and ended in September. The camps, which were picked were owned and operated by county housing authorities. We thought that we would have trouble getting into privately owned camps.

Complete samples of the camps were taken. First, research assistants rented houses in the camps. Second, they noted on an impressionistic level, the physical location of drugstores, jails, hospitals and bars -- the things that make up the life of the migrants outside of the camps. They found the movies, stores and churches that the people attended. (There are social paths to the external society. Mexican migrants follow them and seldom deviate. You can see them. Once you find them you are in

a position to judge the effectiveness of the social institutions that serve the Mexican migrant.)

Stratification in Camp Life

Mexican-American migrants constitute a social sub system. There is a ranking of people within these camps---a henpecking order. Anglo migrants for example, have their own section; Mexican another and Filipinos and Blacks another. Many Anglos are permanent residents; some are semi-retired. Most Mexicans are transients. Patterns of social segregation change with each camp and the personality of the manager.

Managers are paid by County Housing Authorities. They may be paternalistic or tyrannical. In camps where the manager is socially concerned, Mexican and Anglo children play together. There is no question that social interaction among the children largely depends upon the camp management.

Camps are little worlds. They have familiar noises and smells. There is a routine. When the picking season begins, families awake at 3 or 4 in the morning. By 6 or 7, busses and trucks transport the workers to the fields. Our interviewers were required to go into the fields and to work with the migrants.

To understand the internal world of the migrant worker meant that the interviewers had to validate them to the people. They told the people who they were and why they were there. No social panaceas were offered. The interviewers explained that they wanted to chat about education; about the kinds of classes migrant workers wanted. Would the migrants attend adult school? For how many hours?

Bright young people---and some not so young---were recruited as additional research assistants. To our pleasant surprise, young migrants understood the basic purpose of our research. Systematic interviewing took

place in the morning, evenings, weekends, whenever people were around. In one month, 1000 people were interviewed in the Central Valley of California.

We recorded size of family, where they came from, where they were going, ages, and other demographic data. Mostly however, we wanted to know what they were interested in doing, what they wanted to learn and how much personal sacrifice they were willing to make in order to attend various classes.

Private camps rank higher than the public camps in terms of facilities. However, the worst migrant housing that we saw was provided by small town landlords who build and rent shacks.

Let's discuss where the migrants come from. They don't all come from out of state. This was a startling finding in our sample. Many are short-distance migrants. They come from nearly cities like Bakersfield and Fresno. As few as 10 percent of our respondents were new arrivals from Mexico. Others come from Texas, particularly from the lower Rio Grande Valley and the Brownsville Corpus Christi area.

Family Relationships

Sometimes fathers who are employed stay behind and the young housewives set out on the migrant trail with the family. Some are accompanied by older members of the family who cannot work. Oldsters, we were told, provide the symbols of social propriety for the entire family. Young children are left along the way with relatives who may live in southern New Mexico or Arizona. These woman "head of households" do the labor negotiation. They may keep the books and decide where to go and how long to stay in a particular locale. This is new. This was not known in the thirties. Migrants return home when the schools open.

Some interesting points in the relationship between parents and children were found. Each member of the family is an economic unit. Children can and do increase the family income.

Growers claim that they contract people to pick crops. Thus when bright teenage girls become teaching aides some growers become irritated. Migrants are like indentured servants and they cannot easily escape from the growers by going to school. (As future teachers you may be caught in the middle of this problem.)

Attitude Toward Education

Even if all the growers were cooperative, and they are not, migrants are exhausted after long days in the fields. Many commit themselves to tutoring programs out of good will and because of a real desire to learn. But like zealous undergraduates who take 18 or 20 units per semester, migrants also over-commit themselves.

What do these people want to learn? They appear to be pragmatic people. Quite a large number indicated interest in learning the English language. This finding dovetails with what we found in studies of the urban areas. However, migrants do not see English as a path to Nirvana. They see it only as a functional tool that is necessary for survival in this society. They do not see the English language as a way to lose their Mexican way of life. "With English," they said, "we negotiate for wages; we can protest and we can talk with our own children." However, most migrants understand some English.

They are, indeed, a practical group. They want to learn things that will help them, here and now. Women wanted to learn to sew. They wanted to improve their domestic skills. Men expressed great interest in auto

mechanics. This seems reasonable since automobiles are the covered wagons of today. They have to be maintained. Migrants can rarely afford expensive highway break-downs. Both men and women showed interest in the automated aspects of agricultural life. Some wanted to learn to drive the tomato picking machines.

Although migrants are highly mobile they see very little of American society. They follow well-travelled routes. When it is time to eat, they know which restaurants will serve them. Few see anything wrong with hamburgers that are served at the back door. They can't afford trouble so they purchase hamburgers at the back door.

My advice to you, members of the Teacher Corps, is to live in these migrant camps. See, firsthand, what I have reported. Get a house in a camp and drop your Anglo stereotype. At first, adults may treat you with indifference. But sooner or later the young ones -- 9 year olds -- will come to stare and to intrude on your privacy. They will ask questions. Answer them.

Normally, adults have little time or desire to play with children. Thus, when you notice them, the children become your friends. They can provide you with expert information about the camp. They will also carry everything you do or say back to their parents. Contact with adults can be established through children. If you are genuine, adults may invite you into their homes. Female teachers are especially welcome, as you will see. (This is the Mexican mother syndrome.) Above all do not misrepresent. Be honest. Tell them that you are there to learn from them.

Migrant parents are concerned about the education of their children. They have high hopes for them. Like all other parents they often engage in the luxury of dreams for their children. But children are needed in

the fields or to care for the smaller ones at home.

Hopefully, at some point, you will have contact with those who are ultimately responsible for educational policies. Visit the superintendents and the school board members. Establish bridges between them and the migrant poor.

There is a story concerning Sargent Shriver's 1967 trip through the San Joaquin Valley. He visited a potato field near Visalia. A number of people were working; they looked hot, dirty, and dusty. The majority were Mexican. Shriver talked with a small thirteen-year-old boy. He asked him how much he got paid for a full sack of potatoes. The boy said, "Fourteen cents a sack." Asked how many sacks he had picked the day before, the boy answered, "Ten." Shriver asked where he drank water. The boy pointed to a galvanized tank in the distance. "Where is the bathroom?" The boy replied, "There is no bathroom."

For a tiny moment in time, Sargent Shriver, (my boss in the Peace Corps, then Director of the War on Poverty) caught glimpse of the world of the migrant -- the invisible poor. As members of the Teacher Corps you can catch more than a glimpse; you are in a position to gain insights and understanding that only a few people have.

THE EMERGENCY OF THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN

Frank Paz
Past President, G.I. Forum

Who is a Mexican-American? There is no question as to who is a Jew or who is a Negro. The answer is clear. But this is not so for Mexican-Americans. When President Truman appointed the first Civil Rights Commission it lacked a Mexican-American member. In fact the commission referred to Mexican-Americans as Latins and Spanish-Americans regardless of whether they were recent immigrants from Puerto Rico or Mexico or had been born and raised in the Southwest.

I will refer to the Southwest group as Chicanos. The Mexican-Americans have given themselves this name, though some dislike it. To many, "Mexican" implies unskilled, untrained and illiterate. They want to run away from this name for these reasons. Many have succeeded. But how did the Mexican-American family get away from this image?

A boy before World War II had his parents, grandparents and God-parents and grew up in this Spanish social environment. It was a Mexican environment in the midst of American society. He then went to school. Whereas his prior authority was his family, at school the Sanchez or Lopez authority gave way to Smith, Brown, and Jones. At church the authority was O'Brien and O'Neal. The cop was not a Sanchez or a Lopez. At school he was told he is American, but he has no one to identify with. At school he would be reprimanded for speaking Spanish. Yet he could take it as a class. So conflict came into his life and he had trouble with his identity as an American.

I was raised in Chicago. The language of the streets there was "Wop," "Dago," "Polak," etc. In response to being called "Spic," a Mexican could

reply "Kike" or "Dago." But in the west the "Polack" became an Anglo and the Mexican was the "out" one. This brought about the "Ivy League Mexican" with the crew haircut who could speak no Spanish. His family escaped the stereotype.

People who had made it ten and fifteen years ago did not know Spanish. But now they have become Mexican-Americans and they have become fluent in the Spanish language. This has changed the entire situation here in California.

We Mexican-Americans have not developed the militancy of the Negroes, but their militancy has helped the Chicano. He has become more self-assured and he wants a place in the American society. This new attitude began to evolve after World War II. Men who had previously only worked in fields had a chance to meet people from all over the country while serving side by side in the armed forces. Mexican-Americans per capita received more decorations than any other group. They fought well for their country. And when they returned from the war they did not find what they had been fighting for. The result was aggressiveness and a high rate of delinquency. But this has now leveled off.

The most strongly militant group of Chicanos is the Brown Berets. These people have had some success, but we need to go one step further and develop initiative from our own ranks. The Brown Berets have emulated the black militants. Instead of the "Black is beautiful" theme, the Brown Berets preach that "Brown is beautiful." We must make our own original attempt to receive recognition and demand our rights.

Today one of the seven Federal Civil Rights Commissioners is a Mexican-American. Out of eighty state assemblymen and forty state senators in California, none are Mexican-American. Of the eight constitutional officers in

the state none are Mexican-American. The last Mexican-American in the California Senate was elected 93 years ago. Yet when the State Constitution was framed in 1849, thirty per cent of the delegates to the convention were Mexican.

We are beginning to get a better leadership than we had. We have to be ourselves and yet become integrated into all areas of American life. Our country cannot spend thirty millions in Vietnam and ignore what is in our own front yard. What is good for the Mexican-American has to be good for the whole country. Unless we have a more positive and democratic approach, we are not going to solve the problems of American society today.